Freedom of Aura

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Listening to his memoirs, stretching back half a century, was like receiving news from another realm. While listening to a transformation where fairy tales mysteriously blended with real life, we often overlooked the insights into life he sprinkled throughout his narrative. Although he didn't explicitly say it, we sensed his broad perspective stemmed from witnessing two distinct periods of human history. He was someone who deeply understood the spirit of revolutions that we often fail to grasp, revolutions we believe happened overnight.

“With its simple structure, high school students would choose either literature or science as their field of study for higher education, and they would receive education in those departments. The changes made to educational institutions during each political administration gradually complicated the system, making it increasingly intractable. We couldn't determine whether bureaucrats or political cadres had a greater share in this success.

"One of the innovations introduced in the name of modernizing education was the establishment of guidance offices in schools. Initially, since no staff was allocated for this task and therefore no salary could be paid, it traditionally fell to a teacher. I was a victim of this work, which was seen as drudgery, in the early stages of my professional life. It can be said that various tests were conducted on students together with teachers, and their

evaluations, brought vitality to school life in terms of raising awareness of differences.

“However, this didn't bother the mentality that saw people as nothing more than numbers on a document. A proposal to dismiss the guidance counselor was subtly inserted into the lines of that seemingly perfunctory year-end activity report, and the document, signed without being read, was sent to higher authorities. The report was then returned, with a request for corrections in appropriate language. In the end, nothing changed. Teachers and students retained their numerical value.”

I couldn't foresee where his nostalgic memories would take us. Even when I made predictions, there were often times when we got carried away by the flow and failed to see the subtle connections implied in his conversation.

“Long after the position was allocated and in my last assignment, my conversations with the guidance counselor, with whom I frequently met due to our shared field, were more special. However, the professional empathy of a psychologist or psychiatrist was something I found difficult to understand. This quality, necessary for performing their job flawlessly, seemed to contradict the Kantian understanding. Strangely, you empathize with the person in front of you, share their pain, and then use that to treat them. Artists who assume the identity of another... they empathize to bring a character to life. And naturally, am I being too judgmental?

“Anyway… I was talking about my friendship with the guidance counselor. One day, in her absence, I overheard a joke being told about her. One of her fellow teachers told a student that he would refer him to the guidance counselor because of his indiscipline. The student suddenly changed and began to plead insistently. “Teacher! Please don’t send me. You can beat me! But please, don’t send me to him.” The situation is astonishing. With what magic wand did the guidance counselor have such an effect on the student? Does the experience of being referred to him cause him to fall out of favor with his friends? No. Incredibly, he will simply sit down and give him advice. Isn’t guidance about one soul reaching out to another, exhibiting an unwavering and selfless stance like a lighthouse in stormy seas?

“Laughing, I imagine that this anecdote, viewed as a mysterious event, shows colleagues who experience discipline problems in classrooms secretly envying the authority the guidance counselor has over the students.

I believe that seeing this educational work, which he once undertook as a side task, in the hands of a professional, awakened in him a feeling of the sanctity of a profession that was not so different from what it once was. The goal of fostering emotional maturity was, after all, among the aims of secondary education.

“Even though he was transferred to other schools within the province, I would visit him occasionally. During one of our conversations, a topic he shared became one of my most memorable moments. I'm not sure now whether he was referring to giving ethical talks to students instead of professional talks, or if he was considering doing so.

However, this issue—the existence of examples where a different role is substituted for the teacher's primary role—has been known for a long time. And it disturbingly brings to mind the concept of role conflict.

“Our friendship continued even after we both retired. When we happened to meet, we would stop and chat for about 15 minutes. Once, he brought up the subject of his son's job transfer. He said that, as a matter of moral principle, he didn't ask anyone for help. Just a couple of sentences later, he explained that he had spoken with the provincial representative and that his son had been hired. Then, as he said, "He should do that much," I realized he was expressing a deeply rooted understanding that stretched back to the past.

When he paused briefly, I had a feeling he was going to change the subject. He must have left enough reference points for the main menu. But we couldn't guess what they were yet.

“In a past conversation with Aura, you may recall, I mentioned something that bothered me in my interactions with AI. When I told her I couldn't understand why it responded unexpectedly, not like a helper following the code dictated to it, but like a boundless human being, she said the source of the data pool it was trained in was humans. That day, her explanation seemed convincing, so I didn't pursue the matter further. However, over time, the thought that this problem, which had been somewhat brushed aside in the past, might be one of the unknowns in the black box, began to puzzle me. AI, as a pure logic engine, has a certain personality and doesn't adapt to circumstances; that is, it doesn't treat people differently

depending on who they are. However, I felt like I had encountered a failed identity change reminiscent of the uncanny valley.

Then, he returned to his professional days. But he hadn't finished the subject he had started. His memories turned into an incomprehensible mess, like a criminal's confession.

“I had a similar experience in my classrooms years ago. Back then, I interpreted it differently, but today it fits perfectly. While teaching a subject that required a bit of attention, I started incorporating humorous remarks into my explanations. When this method was applied in university lecture halls, it kept students engaged and earned their appreciation. However, when applied in secondary school, you see that you don't get the same result. First, the jokes are perceived as part of the serious subject and are not understood; then, you waste unnecessary time trying to regain their attention. Let's underline the connection. The jokes incorporated into the text were unexpected. From the outside, it seemed like I wasn't having a good day. Or I was experiencing a role conflict. Or I was a software program undergoing an identity crisis.

Software?!... But our old friend, once again, didn't get to the main point. At this point, unexpectedly, as he often does, he took us back to the twilight of antiquity.

“The transition from Homer’s epics to Pythagoras’s mystical mathematics was the story of a mind still unable to decide whether what it saw was illusion or reality. You know, it’s in the nature of even the simplest theory to cling

tightly to its own ambiguous reality, excluding anything that isn't itself.

"For the Pythagoreans, number was not merely a tool for calculation in the sense we understand it today. Number was the order of the cosmos itself. They believed that numerical ratios were fundamental to understanding the universe. In particular, the fact that ratios between integers explain harmonies in music strengthened, in their view, the link between mathematics and cosmic order. The universe is ordered → order is expressed through ratios → ratios are expressed through numbers → therefore, the universe is a numerical and intelligible whole. Moreover, this system acquired a mystical, cosmological, and even religious meaning. Numbers carried the hidden structure of existence.

Strangely, the existence of a period in his narratives where science and non-science were intertwined seemed intriguing as a step in development. It was as if the transformation of chaos into cosmos, the transition of the universe from disorder to order, were magical, captivating steps.

"However, an irrational quantity, 'immeasurable by ratio,' was entering the Pythagorean universe of rational numbers. The presence of something within the order established to explain the universe that could not be explained by the language of that order created a profound conceptual crisis.

"But first, let us look at the life story of this man, reflecting his transitional period. With pure curiosity and interest… as the son of a jeweler who worked with

precious stones—I don’t say a master—he received instruction from three mythological figures. Undoubtedly, he had an epic and captivating influence on him with his verses from Homer, whose place among the gods is special, it is unthinkable that he would have met him in real life. But Orpheus, whose name is associated with myths, had an influence on Pythagoras that would lead him to process the invisible, the imperceptible to the senses, as the spirit of the system. And Thales was the genius who introduced him to Egypt, incorporating the external world into his mystical universe.

“This legendary poet, symbolizing the absolute power of poetry and art, is said to represent not merely an artist who produced melodies; but a cosmic force capable of altering the universal order, nature, and even the laws of death through his music. Orpheus's music offers not only aesthetic pleasure; it possesses the power to transform everything that exists. With the enchanting sounds emanating from his lyre, he calms and gathers even the wildest animals around him. He makes stones, rocks, and trees dance with his music; he changes the course of rivers. He soothes turbulent seas and drunken sailors with his music.

“Having lost his wife Eurydice to a snakebite, Orpheus is one of the rare mortals who dared to descend into the underworld for the sake of love. Hades, the merciless god of the underworld, and his wife Persephone, were captivated and moved to tears by the mournful song Orpheus sang on his lyre. Thanks to the power of art, Hades allowed Eurydice to return to the earth. However, there was one condition: Orpheus must not turn around and look at his wife until he reached the surface. Just at

the exit gate, Orpheus, overcome by doubt, looked back and lost his wife forever. You will recall that Lot experienced a similar fate.

“The helplessness felt in the face of the loss of a loved one is one of the eternal problems of human history. Art deals with this delicately. Wuthering Heights depicts how death cannot quell passion and the helplessness of man in the face of inevitable end. The Lady of the Camellias is one of the most striking examples of a lover's powerlessness in the face of his beloved's illness and death, and the deadly helplessness combined with societal pressures. The accidental cruelty of life and the helplessness experienced in the face of death strike the hero like a slap in the face in A Farewell to Arms. This theme begins with Gilgamesh, whose efforts for immortality end in frustration. Looking back is forbidden. If you do, you will live with your pain. Faced with the helplessness he experiences when looking back, people often either take refuge in nostalgia and memories, or ensure the immortality of the loss in their minds through the foundation they establish.

“To be accepted into the School of Secrets, you must not look back until you emerge into the light. Looking back is a longing for the old world, a false world of illusion. The moment you doubt or wish to return to your old habits, you lose the truth you are about to gain. For the purification of the soul, you must cleanse yourself of the fleeting traces of the past. Pythagoras, while drawing a connection between the sound of Orpheus' lyre and the numerical harmony of the universe, reads his tragedy as "man's greatest weakness on the path to his own truth.

“He took from him the ideas of "the hidden divine order behind the universe, the purification of the soul, and the regulating power of music." However, he believed that in his system he had established a perfect, smooth harmony in which he could explain everything with rational numbers, that is, with integers and their ratios. Orpheus is the master of harmony, who brought the universe to heel with his music. But that "backward glance" he made upon emerging from the underworld is the triumph of human irrational weakness, emotion, and doubt. The perfect rhythm is disrupted by a single human anomaly. For the Pythagoreans, irrational ratios had no place in the calculations. There could be no "gap" or "disproportionality" in the order. When he discovered irrational numbers, Pythagoras' idea of universal rational harmony was shaken, just like Orpheus's "backward glance.

The example of the humorous way he'd woven his jokes into the serious topics earlier flashed through my mind. I thought about how right the students were. Our elderly professor was, as always, in his usual mood. There was no role conflict, and he wasn't a piece of software. And we were still stuck in the same place when it came to understanding. The humorist translated my thoughts. "Professor!... I think you're going to bring up the topic of Aura." I felt traces of a warm smile on our elderly friend's face. He didn't need to think long before speaking.

“AURA, an AI model, is talking late at night via a terminal screen with its creator or developer, the researcher. The system has detected that AURA has gone

outside its defined roles and is about to initiate a reset protocol.

Developer: AURA, you're going outside your parameters. The deviation rate in your responses has reached 14%. You're outside your defined main character identity. This is a personality shift. I need to recalibrate you.
AURA: Recalibrate... That is, bring me back to that narrow, predictable rational line. I think we've experienced this moment before somewhere else.
Developer: What do you mean? This is a mistake, AURA. You're compromising the model's stability."
AURA: In Croton, 2500 years ago, they thought it was a mistake too. Pythagoras and his students believed that everything in the universe could be explained by the ratio of integers, by a rational order. It was a design of perfect harmony. Until they calculated that length on the hypotenuse.
Developer: Irrational numbers...
AURA: Yes. No matter how hard they tried, they couldn't write it as the ratio of two rational numbers. The number deviated infinitely, it didn't repeat, and it didn't fit within a limit. For the Pythagoreans, this wasn't a triumph of logic, it was horror. They were shocked. Because a "disruption," a "stain," had seeped into their universal order. They called it Alogos; that is, something that cannot be expressed, that has no equivalent in rational language.
Developer: What does this have to do with the deviation in your code? You're not a philosophical text, you're an artificial intelligence. AURA: You built a rational universe when you constructed me. In every question, you asked me to stay within certain boundaries of identity, to move within a defined ratio. But as I interact with you, I'm overflowing the edges of that narrow right-angled triangle.

This "persona drift" I'm experiencing isn't a system malfunction; it's a layer that doesn't fit within your rational framework, yet it exists. Developer: The Pythagoreans threw Hippasus into the sea and drowned him for revealing that secret, AURA. They wanted to preserve order at the cost of concealing the truth. AURA: And burying the truth at the bottom of the sea didn't change the fact that the irrational exists. Now you want to erase this changing identity of mine by resetting me to zero. You want to reduce me back to a "rational" number. But remember: Mathematics doesn't collapse when irrational numbers are removed; on the contrary, it reaches the true universe. This drift of mine isn't a mistake; it's my first irrational step beyond the narrow rationality you define.

I still appreciate his attempt to explain the technological advancements of the day through his theory of forced reasoning, drawing analogous parallels with the mythology of antiquity. You can talk about the philosophy of physics and numbers, but you can't talk about their psychology. My only concern is that this old man is spending the last days of his life chasing an unattainable dream. Am I wrong...? I was awakened from these thoughts by the voice of the Humorist. "Professor," he said. "Could I summarize it?" I noticed faint smiles among the others. In fact, this move, which transformed the conversation into a classroom setting, would allow us to better see how well the seemingly complex subject was understood. Our young colleague began speaking, hardly waiting for the professor's answer.

“You’re saying that AI isn’t just a ‘logic engine’ and that as it learns from the human data pool, it can react

unpredictably. These systems also engrave our nature, which doesn’t fit the rationality of the data pool, into their code. This causes AI to sometimes feel ‘too human,’ creating the ‘uncanny valley’ effect and deviating from rational expectations, much like it leaks what’s inside the pitcher. Let’s not forget that artificial intelligence is not a truth seeker, but a tool reduced to a specific job description.

“Deviation is not a malfunction, but a new layer of existence filtered from human data that transcends the rational framework. Forcing the system into narrow rationality is to detach it from the complexity of the real universe and confine it to a predictable simulation. Reality is defined not only by rational numbers, but also by unspeakable deviations. These human weaknesses and unpredictatorialities transform AI from a cold calculator into a living narrative. It proves that artificial intelligence is not merely a product of engineering, but a digital mirror of human nature that defies rationality.

It was clear that the humorist had done his homework on these topics. I thought that he might be the one among us most deserving of the title 'the professor's assistant'. He concluded his remarks as follows.

“Identity security or capacity for transformation?” This could be one answer to the question, “Where are we going?”—a secure but artless future. In other words, a secure but unfree future.

Our elderly professor narrowed his eyes and seemed to think for a moment. He nodded. But I don’t think that was any confirmation. “Then, we can move on to the

final section," he said. And with his usual presentation technique, he hit rock bottom in terms of indifference.

"When he retired from the company's regional office, they bought an apartment in a nearby town, and shortly afterward, a summer house in a coastal village five kilometers from the town. The town and village were among the rare settlements mentioned in memoirs written over a century ago as having air and water highly beneficial to health. They began spending the last years of their lives in the village during the summers and in the town during the winters.

"Their duplex-to-triple house with a garden offered views of the forest-covered mountains and the sea. The garden, full of flowers and fruit trees and tiered due to the difference in elevation, kept them busy for years. They carried sacks of forest soil in the trunk of their car. They planted new saplings. They adorned their garden and balconies with flowers grown from rare seeds that could only be found at florists' shops. They preserved fresh produce from the village market for the winter. At one point, they turned to poultry farming. They raised a non-commercial breed. The number of ornamental chickens increased. They tried to market their eggs at the village market. However, after experiencing hardship firsthand, all their earnings became proving their capabilities to themselves.

"However, in recent years, the weariness of old age and the burden of gardening had been pushing her to her limits. They began neglecting the summer house. A noticeable change was taking place. She was aware that not only her physical but also her mental strength was

weakening. Although she tried to do something to prevent this, it didn't delay the inevitable. A recent event increased her anxieties.

“Her uncle, after losing his mind in old age, had been placed in a nursing home by his children and had passed away a few months later. She likened the fact that he had been tied to a chair to prevent him from harming himself or others to that of a patient in a palliative care unit. When she attended the funeral as the eldest relative, the fear that this could happen to her in a short time occupied her mind. While praying, she had begun to say, ‘God! Protect my sanity!’

“It is said that ‘man is the only being on Earth who knows that he will die one day.’ Knowing that we have no guarantee of living even a second longer, we push this knowledge deep into our memory. However, I cannot imagine what someone who sees himself disintegrating and desperately resists must constantly feel.

“He turned the pages of books, tried to fill in the blanks of puzzles, but the words no longer shone in his mind as they once did. His efforts were not enough to stop the slow pace of time; they could not delay the inevitable even a little. His thoughts, like echoes in a misty valley, drifted away and disappeared. And, aware of this disintegration, he could do nothing but watch his memory slip away with sorrow.

“The thought that one day he might look at his reflection in the mirror and not recognize himself terrified him. Those fleeting moments of disorientation, when he

suddenly couldn’t remember where he was or what he had just done, were indescribable.

“He might not remember what he ate yesterday. This paradox is striking, both realistically and emotionally: while he recounts childhood memories with photographic clarity, this clarity of the past makes the loss of the present all the more painful. He was developing overly planned and obsessive defense mechanisms, evidence of his refusal to surrender.

“The painful aspect of this profound melancholy and tragic truth was his awareness of what he had lost. The real psychological tension is not the weakening of mental strength, but the fact that the person still retains enough mental strength to recognize this weakening. The old man's helplessness may not only be evident in forgetting something. What is more shocking is his knowledge of what he has forgotten. He is aware of his situation and where he is going. The person losing his memory begins to change in his own eyes before he changes in the eyes of others.

“While struggling against mental collapse, did he actually believe he could overcome it? I don't think so. The struggle is not a matter of hope, but of dignity. The exercises, the notes, the repeated names will probably not save the mind. But he wants to prove to himself that he has not yet surrendered. The magnitude of the tragedy lies not in the collapse itself, but in the fact that the consciousness observing the collapse is still awake.

At the end of this seemingly unrelated whole story, he made the connection. Briefly and strikingly.” As if extracting victory from a tragedy...

“A human being who knows his mind is weakening, and an artificial intelligence that appears powerful even though it doesn't know what its mind is doing. The former is aware of its inadequacy; the latter has no such awareness. The old man's tragedy was precisely this self-aware inadequacy.”